

## Underhill Invasives Task Force Minutes

August 26, 2019, Underhill Town Hall

**Note:** Action items in red

- **In attendance:**
  - **UCC:** Betsy Chapek, Daphne Tanis, Karen McKnight, Dan Steinbauer
  - **Community Members:** Sandy Murphy, Steve Webster
  - **Collaborators/Guests:** Sabina Ernst (Jericho Conservation Commission)
- **Meeting Called to Order:** 6:36 PM
- **Public Comments:**
  - Sandy commented on the importance of working to control invasives, not just in Underhill, but throughout the state and country (and world)
- **Meeting Norms:**
  - The TF agreed to the following meeting norms:
    - Start and end on time
    - Have respectful discussions
    - Don't interrupt
    - Stay on topic
    - Adhere to Roberts Rules
  - The TF agreed to the following decision-making process:
    - Quorum = 4
    - A decision requires a simple majority of those TF members present to pass
- **Approve 6/24/2019 Minutes:**
  - Karen moved, Betsy seconded
  - Approved
- **Quick Review of Goal Statement:**
  - The TF agreed to use the following as a working goal statement:
    - The goal of the Underhill Invasives Task Force is to identify and implement strategies for controlling invasive species in Underhill in order to promote and maintain biodiversity, native flora and fauna, and healthy ecosystems with a focus on riparian habitats.
- **8/17 Work Party Update:**
  - [Pictures from Steve](#)
  - [Pictures from Peter Duval](#)
  - Suggestions for revised protocol from Peter Duval:
    - Work from margins in toward the center of each patch
    - Process any rhizomes on the already infected area instead of on the road
  - The TF agreed that these ideas make sense, so the revised "pull and dig" process is:
    - Use this protocol in areas away from brooks, streams, etc.
    - Clear a small work area in a patch to use for processing rhizomes
    - Clear a small area outside a patch for piling and drying out stalks
      - Place one or more pallets on the ground in this area to keep the stalks off the ground to facilitate better drying
    - Starting from the margins and working toward the center of each patch, pull or dig out stalks with as much crown and rhizome as possible and pile in the work area
    - Shake off as much dirt as possible, being careful to not break off any small pieces of rhizome (Remember that as little as ½ inch of rhizome can generate a new plant)

- Cut the stalks one or two nodes above the point where the stalk was connected to the crown (The bottom nodes appear to be putting out roots/rhizomes)
  - Pile the stalks with no rhizomes attached on the pallets
  - Put the crowns and rhizomes in bags to be composted
  - Remove the bags at the end of each work party
  - "Police" the area for any small pieces of rhizome
- Beartown gravel pit knotweed patches
  - There are at least 3 patches that need to be addressed
  - **Schedule Ethan to review--Karen**
- Patch at Moore Park (cleared by Karen, Peter H, and Steve in May, 2019)
  - As expected, plants are regenerating
    - Need to cut/pull again
  - Karen burned the top of the pile of stalks on 8/17
    - Bottom of the pile was too soggy to burn
  - Suggestion: Pile on pallets to help dry
- **Betsy will gather pallets**
- **Invasives Inventory--Daphne:**
  - Daphne's family proposes finding funding to pay for a team to inventory knotweed in Underhill
    - Grant possibilities?
  - Suggestion: Create a quick Google form and ask Underhill citizens if and where they have knotweed patches
    - Other invasives?
    - **Steve will create a draft Google form**
- **Collaborating with Jericho Conservation Commission & Jericho Underhill Land Trust:**
  - The TF agreed that we should collaborate in order to increase our effectiveness and reduce duplication of effort
  - The TF had proposed an invasives workshop with Elizabeth Spinney at Town Hall
    - Jericho Conservation Commission has committed to do a workshop as well
    - JCC and Underhill Task Force should collaborate on a workshop
  - We should jointly develop management plans
  - We should collaborate on PR efforts (Mountain Gazette, FPF, etc.)
    - **Steve will build a prototype website** for one-stop shopping for invasives information and resources
  - Other towns?
- **Work on Strategies and Plan:**
  - Key tasks:
    - Decide next steps for knotweed control efforts
      - Inventory knotweed (and other invasives) in Underhill
        - Online survey--**Steve will create a draft Google form**
      - Question: Who is focusing on invasives on state-wide level?
    - Educate Town Road Crew (and VT road crews?)
      - **Karen will talk with road crew**
      - We have concerns that knotweed is being spread by snowplowing, road construction and maintenance, etc.
    - Public education
      - Workshop:
        - Collaborate with Jericho

- Possible Speakers: Elizabeth Spinney, Mike Bald, Will Dunkley, Andrea Shortsleeve (VT Fish & Wildlife)
      - Sabina will explore having one of them do a workshop in October
    - Assemble a collection of information and resources (website?)
      - Refer to other resources (VT Invasives.org, Maine, etc.)
      - Mike Bald, [Got Weeds?](#)
        - <https://www.sevendaysvt.com/vermont/mike-balds-mission-to-eradicate-invasive-plants/Content?oid=3527512>
      - Will Dunkley, Vermont Invasive Management
        - 1362 Old Stage Road Westford, VT, 05494
        - 802-324-7112
        - [wdunkley65@gmail.com](mailto:wdunkley65@gmail.com)
    - Ask state if there is an app similar to EAB app (ANR)--Dan?
  - **Next Meeting:**
    - Sept 10th, 7:00 - 8:30 PM
      - Underhill Town Hall
    - Proposed Agenda:
      - Public comments
      - Clarify who is a Task Force member and who has voting rights
      - Clarify our role:
        - TF is an advisory group to the Selectboard?
        - Selectboard makes decisions
      - Decide on next steps for knotweed control efforts
        - Send doc to collect ideas--Steve
        - Mills Riverside Park
      - Review online survey and website, if available
  - **Meeting Adjourned:**
    - Karen moved, Betsy seconded, approved
    - 8:08 PM
-